

Remarks

Claims 21-42 are currently under examination in this application. The claims on file are not amended in this response. Applicant believes that the objections are overcome by the accompanying remarks, making claim Amendment unnecessary. Therefore, no listing of the claims is presented herewith.

Specification

The substitute specification was not entered because it did not include a statement that it does not include any new matter. Said statement follows:

Statement Regarding the Substitute Specification submitted on June 6, 2002

I, M. Robert Kestenbaum, Attorney of Record for Applicant hereby state that the substitute specification submitted on June 6, 2002 did not include in any new matter. I respectfully believe that with this statement, the substitute specification should be entered.

I hereby declare that all statements made herein on my own knowledge are true and that all statements made on information and belief are believed to be true; and further, that these statements were made with the knowledge that willful false statements and the like so made are punishable by fine or imprisonment, or both, under Section 1001 of Title 18 of the United States Code and that such willful false statements may jeopardize the validity of the application or any patent issued thereon.



M. Robert Kestenbaum

April 4, 2005

Treatment of Claims 32, 35 and 39

Applicant notes the Examiner's opinion that claims 32, 35, and 39 will be treated as independent claims.

Drawings

The Office Action objects to the drawings because they fail to show the function of each module and apparatus as described in the specification. Applicant submits a Letter to the Draftsperson of the US Patent and Trademark Office requesting the Examiner's approval of replacement sheets 1 and 2 in which text labels indicate the function of the respective components.

Requirement to Provide Industry Standard EN 50254

The Office Action requires that Applicant clearly cite the details of industry standard EN 50254, including the date the standard was issued, the body that issued the standard, and the full name of the standard. Applicant will amend the specification to include the complete details for standard EN 50254 as soon as a copy of the standard is available to this office. Applicant thanks the Examiner for his patience in waiting for these details in the near future.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 112

Claim 34 is rejected as being indefinite in that the standard "EN 50254" is a relative term which renders the claim indefinite. The "112" rejections will be overcome when the details regarding EN 50254 are provided to the Examiner and the specification is appropriately amended.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 102

Claims 21-23 and 25-33 are rejected as being anticipated by Ying.

Ying describes a control network based on a hierarchical bus system, wherein a master unit and a plurality of slave units are connected to a main bus. A switch is provided for each unit, controlled by the respective unit, by means of which the respective unit and, if appropriate, a secondary bus connected thereto, can be disconnected from the main bus. In order to localize the source of an error that occurs, first all units are disconnected from the bus and then the slave units are successively reconnected, controlled by the main unit.

Row 14, lines 22 and 23 of Ying discloses that the cable of the bus line can also comprise a pair of power wires. However, no hint can be found as to how the units, which are connected to the bus, are connected to the power wires.

Therefore, Ying does not disclose that the bus units are connected to the supply voltage in series. Accordingly, there is no hint in Ying regarding an apparatus comprising a supply voltage input and an associated supply voltage output. Furthermore, in Ying's system, no device for disconnecting the supply voltage is provided, but only a switch for disconnecting the signal lines of the bus.

Therefore, according to Applicant's understanding, the subject matter of the pending claims are neither anticipated nor obvious in view of Ying.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC 103

Claims 24 and 35-42 are rejected as being obvious over Ying and Schminke.

Schminke describes a high-voltage direct-current supply system with over-current protection, in which the high-voltage source includes a plurality of separately switchable, series-connected medium-high voltage sources.

Contrary to the present application, Schminke describes a voltage source that comprises several series-connected voltage sources, but no modules that are connected in series to the voltage source.

Therefore, a person of ordinary skill in the art does not find a hint in Schminke leading to the subject matter of the independent claims of the present application.

According to Applicant's understanding, the subject matter of the pending claims is also not obvious in view of the combined teachings of Ying and Schminke.

Further Cited Documents

According to Applicant's understanding, the subject matter of the pending claims is also not obvious in view of the combined teachings of Ying and Schminke.

Further Cited Documents

The present invention is also not disclosed in the references of Schreiter, Kramer and Behm (cited in the Office Action). These references relate to automation systems comprising a serial data bus.

Concerning the Behr reference, it is noted that the Behr reference does not qualify as prior art with respect to 35 USC 102, since the present invention claims a priority date of June 28, 1999 and the filing date for Behr is May 22, 2000.

A two-month extension of time in which to respond to the outstanding Office Action is hereby requested. PTO 2038 authorizing charging a credit card in the amount of \$450 is enclosed for the prescribed Large Entity two-month extension fee.

Wherefore further consideration and allowance of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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I hereby certify under 37 CFR §1.8(a) that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as first class mail with sufficient postage on the date indicated below and is addressed to the Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on April 4, 2005.



M. Robert Kestenbaum